



**ReForest London**  
planting the future today

# 2017

**ANNUAL  
REPORT**



## WHO WE ARE

Our mission is to plant, grow and sustain London's urban forest by engaging our community. Trees provide our community with an incredibly long list of benefits and we aim to see London packed full of those benefits.

Take a look at the hundreds of events and the thousands of trees to the right here and you can see we are doing just that. In addition to our own events and plantings, we are driving London's Million Tree Challenge which aims to inspire and empower Londoners to plant trees on their own land, all across the city.

We rely on strong community partnerships, eager volunteers and generous donors to ensure the Forest City grows its leafy canopy of trees.

Healthy and livable cities always need more trees. We have programs to help get trees into backyards, businesses, industrial lands, schools, parks and natural areas – any type of land. We can help you make your corner of the city greener and leafier - give us a call!

## 2017 BY THE NUMBERS

**5,946** Trees planted

**2,501** Shrubs planted

**6,636** Trees given away

**5,968** Seedlings given away

**7,731** Volunteer actions

**215** Projects & Events:

**67** School projects and events

**40** Naturalization & community plantings

**25** Tree Depots

**14** Neighbourhood Tree Blitzes

**33** Aftercare events

**36** Outreach & educational events

**383,068** Trees planted by Londoners through the Million Tree Challenge at the end of 2017

# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Our job at ReForest London is to make our community healthier and greener – and what a pleasure that job is. The trees we plant today not only benefit us right away but their benefit grows and grows over time until they are a full-blown canopy of green for a future generation. Trees shower us with health and environmental benefits, all the while being beautiful. Planting a living legacy for future generations was even more poignant in 2017 with the sesquicentennial celebrations of both Canada and Ontario.

That's the difference we are making. That's the difference our community partners and supporters are making. Every Londoner who plants a tree is making that difference, for themselves, for their children and for the future.

Londoners of all stripes know the value of more trees in our community and are a fundamental part of our success. Thank you to everyone who has planted a tree with us, staffed a community booth, given away seedlings, organized an event, worked on a committee, helped in the office or given of their professional skills. And of course, deep thanks to all individuals and organizations that have supported us financially. We couldn't do it without you.

We all enjoy the shade of trees planted by people a generation before us. Consider what you might do to leave a leafy legacy this year. Together, we make a difference.



Dean Sheppard, Executive Director





# MILLION TREE CHALLENGE

In 2017, the Million Tree Challenge (MTC) tree count almost surpassed the population of London with 383,068 trees planted and registered! This community-wide challenge continues to engage Londoners in the vision of a green, healthy and leafy community.

Million Tree Challenge Partners and supporters backed tree planting in London in a variety of ways including direct donations, funding park naturalizations, sponsoring tree giveaways, planting trees on their own property, sponsoring events, donating in-kind products or services, volunteering and helping to promote the MTC.

The power of the Million Tree Challenge is community collaboration. In 2017, 380 actions were taken by ~200 London businesses and organizations. This is remarkable community action. Platinum level sponsor, the Richard and Beryl Ivey Fund, a fund through the London Community Foundation, continued to lead support of this important initiative. Cornerstone Architecture became a Silver level sponsor with a five year pledge.



***Above: MTC Partner STIHL sponsored a tree giveaway on National Tree Day. Below: MTC Founding Partner the City of London made National Tree Day a success with a lot of great publicity!***





*Above: A happy seedling recipient at the annual Forest City Road Races.  
Below: Rogers Gives volunteers from Rogers TV London deliver National Tree Day trees for people with disabilities.*



National Tree Day supports London's Million Tree Challenge and the goal of people planting trees on private property (and of course adding all their newly planted trees to our official count!).

In one day, 12 different Partners gave away a total of 3,170 trees/seedlings at 27 locations. This included 1,205 trees by the City of London and 895 trees by ReForest London. Getting more trees on residential lands is key to growing our urban forest.

Two other large seedling give-aways were the Forest City Road Races, where 1,000 seedlings sponsored by MTC Partner Bentley Hearing Services were given to race registrants, and the Western Fair, where five different MTC Partners sponsored some of the 600 seedlings given to fairgoers to plant and register.

Thank you to all Partners and supporters of London's Million Tree Challenge for making 2017 another active year with much development, collaboration and growth.



# NATURALIZATIONS & OTHER PLANTINGS

When we began in 2005, ReForest London and our volunteers planted just over 2,000 native trees and shrubs across London in parks, neighbourhoods and industrial areas. With great pride, we can announce that in 2017, we once again were able to increase our annual planting impact to 7,130 native trees and shrubs!

In 2017, in celebration of both Canada's and Ontario's 150th birthday, ReForest London did a naturalization planting in each of London's 14 wards thanks to special funding through Ontario 150 Community Celebration Program, the City of London, and the Government of Canada's EcoAction program. We had a great turnout for these plantings with local councillors joining us and were able to serve some delicious birthday cupcakes too.

A group comprised of members from 10 different religious organizations, along with Western's Circle K International Club, came together on a sunny day in September to plant trees at Peppertree Park. These volunteers from many faiths gathered to learn more about each other's beliefs, to plant



*Above: The annual interfaith planting, at Peppertree Park brought 10 faith groups together, sharing their faith links to nature.  
Below: Happy planters at Virginia Park, September 2017.*





native trees and shrubs and share food and fellowship. A huge thank you to all the volunteers for their hard work transforming a section of the park into a leafy, green baby forest! Over the past five years, the interfaith community has planted 1500 trees and shrubs together throughout London.

Londoners love trees and in 2017 we had 1820 volunteers out to our planting events including 52 volunteer groups. We held 36 planting events at 28 sites which encompassed 6 watersheds and 11 neighbourhoods.

*All these planting projects clean our air and water, help our urban forest adapt to climate change, create wildlife habitat, improve our neighbourhoods and increase London's woodland and tree canopy cover. We are grateful to all the sponsors who supported these projects in 2017 including:*

*Canada Bread, Citibank Canada, City of London, CN EcoConnexions, Columbia Sportswear, Cornerstone Architecture, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO), The Government of Canada (EcoAction Program; Tree to Our Nature Program), Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund, Harris Home Hardware, IKEA, KPMG, Lanktree Tree Services, London Interfaith Community, London Life, Nav Canada, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (Land Stewardship and Habitat Restoration Program), The Province of Ontario (Ontario150 Community Celebration Program), PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, RBC Foundation (RBC Blue Water Project), St. Williams Nursery & Ecology Centre, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, The Tea Haus, Tree Canada, and TRY Recycling.*

## 2017 Naturalizations

- Canterbury Park
- Carroll Park
- Celebration Forest
- Cresthaven Park
- Dingman Park
- Egelton Woods
- ETFO
- Enterprise SWM
- Fairmont Park
- Fox Hollow Ravine North
- Hyde Park Woods
- Jalna South Park
- Kains Woods SWM
- Kains Woods Trail
- Marr Drain
- McNay Drain South
- Nicholas Wilson Park
- Paul Haggis Park and SWM
- Peppertree Park
- Saunders Secondary School
- Somerset Woods
- Southwinds Park
- Talltree Park
- Thames Park
- Virginia Park and SWM
- West Lions Park

*Right: Planting a tree in memory in Celebration Forest.*



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

ReForest London once again took part in dozens of community events across the city in 2017. In total, we had a community booth at 36 events, including Seedy Saturday, Go Wild Grow Wild, Forest City Road Races, Aboriginal Solidarity Day, Gathering on the Green, Western Fair, volunteer fairs and many more! In all, we reached over 7,000 people who we spoke to about the importance of being part of London's Million Tree Challenge by getting trees, planting trees and of course registering those trees. Our volunteers helped us give away 3,737 seedlings at several of these events.

In addition to these events, with the support of Ontario150 funding, ReForest London held its first ever Forest Festival. The goal of the event was to celebrate and bring awareness to our province's trees and forests by providing a plethora of fun activities and interesting vendors. Over 500 people were in attendance, and we enjoyed a free tree-themed lunch provided by the amazing Growing Chefs! Ontario.



***Above: Volunteers give out baby native trees at the Western Fair.  
Below: The Canadian Raptor Conservancy put on a great show for the crowd at the Forest Festival.***







*Above: A large family group plants a tree in the Celebration Forest in memory. Below: Mom and daughter, Kathleen and Willow, plant a tree in the Celebration Forest in Willow's honour.*



## GIFT OF A TREE

For the seventh year, hundreds of people gathered for the annual Celebration Forest Event to honour their loved ones by planting trees in their name. All honourees were acknowledged during the ceremony and their names appear on the dedication signage and online.

This planting is one of most meaningful ways for people to pay tribute to others through trees. Celebration Forest trees are planted for many reasons - in memory of someone dear who has passed, in celebration of a birth, wedding, birthday, or other milestone, and by businesses in celebration and in memory of clients, employees and colleagues. A tree really is the perfect gift!

The two events attracted approximately 450 guests, and were made possible by the work of 75 volunteers and staff. The ceremony preceding the planting was made extra special with a poem written and read by local poet Olha Nowosad, called "Trees."

A huge thank you to event sponsors St. Williams Nursery & Ecology Centre, Ontario150 and Lanktree Tree Services for their generous support.

# NEIGHBOURHOOD RELEAF

We had a very busy 2017! In spring and fall, we gave away or planted 6,636 free trees through the Neighbourhood ReLeaf program to 2,283 households. We were supported by 287 volunteers who gave over 1,300 hours of their time to make their communities leafier. We believe that our Neighbourhood ReLeaf program is the biggest of its kind in Canada.

## TREE DEPOTS

We held 25 Tree Depots in spring and fall where 4,505 trees were given away. Over 45 species of native and fruit trees were available, including everything from Pawpaws to Tulip trees!

We also offered two Fruit Tree Care Workshops and three General Tree Care Workshops to Londoners who were interested to learn more about keeping their trees healthy and happy. We want the trees residents are planting to create a greener city. This means we also need to educate people on how to be great tree caretakers so a leafy legacy will be a reality for the Forest City.



***Above: (left) Putting out the Pawpaws at the Springbank Tree Depot. (right) A family getting trees at the Coves Tree Depot. Below: Unloading trees for National Tree Day's City depots.***



# TREE BLITZES

Volunteer wagon teams visited 14 low-canopy neighbourhoods where a total of 1,873 trees found new homes. Planted by volunteers at residents' homes or given out at Blitz event headquarters, homeowners were thrilled to get new trees. In addition to the wagon teams, volunteer truck drivers delivered and planted trees across London for anyone who needed help. We also can't forget our elite team of GIS volunteers who created route maps for the Blitz wagon teams, and who entered data into our database and registered each tree into the Million Tree Challenge.

In keeping with our mission to enhance human health through the benefits of trees, we connected with community efforts to increase food security and access to healthy food and provided, delivered or planted 100 fruit trees to members of London's Child and Youth Network.

*The Neighbourhood ReLeaf program would not be possible without the generous support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Richard & Beryl Ivey Fund – a fund within the London Community Foundation, Healthy Kids Community Challenge, and City of London (TreeMe Program).*



***Above: Western Serves Blitz volunteers at St. Lawrence Presbyterian Church. Below: Our dedicated Blitz volunteers delivered and planted trees for homeowners, on foot, by truck and by bike!***





# SCHOOL COMMUNITY TREE CHALLENGE

2017 was truly a banner year of tree planting and learning activities with school groups in our community. Over 5,000 students of all ages participated in 67 unique projects. Schools grew seedlings in their classrooms, planted native trees and shrubs in schoolyards, parks and natural areas, hosted tree giveaways in partnership with our Neighbourhood ReLeaf program, and participated in educational tree hikes at ReForest London. We are pleased to report that 5,454 new trees and shrubs were planted and distributed by students, parent volunteers, and school staff through the School Community Tree Challenge program.

While the whole year was full of amazing work with students, one of our highlights was the park naturalization project at West Lions Park in May where over 200 trees and shrubs were planted by students from Jeanne Sauvé French Immersion Public School and Eagle Heights Public School. This event was a great way to honour Canada's and Ontario's 150<sup>th</sup> birthday, by setting down roots and planting trees for future generations of Londoners, Ontarians and Canadians. Students



*Above: Woodland Heights Public School grade 6 students enjoy a Tree Hike. Below: Students from Eagle Heights Public School pause for a photo during a large naturalization planting at West Lions Park.*



had a great time and were excited to be giving back to their community.

In Fall, we welcomed nine school groups of students in Grades 4-8 to participate in a free field trip which featured a nature hike and tree planting. Students learned how to identify eight different native trees, then planted trees with their class near the Celebration Forest. It was a lovely way to cap off the fall and we had tons of fun getting our hands dirty with students in this new type of activity.

## **2017 School Planting Projects & Events: 67**

**Schoolyard tree planting projects - 18**

**Park naturalizations (with schools) - 10**

**Tree depots at schools - 7**

**Seedling give-aways (with students) - 3**

**Seedling growing initiatives at schools - 16**

**Educational tree hikes & plantings - 13**

**Number of schools involved - 48**

**Number of students participating - 5,030**

**Number of trees and shrubs planted - 5,454**

*This program was made possible through the generous support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation, The Government of Ontario (Ontario150 Partnership Program), CN EcoConnexions, The Government of Canada, and the Walter J. Blackburn Foundation.*



*Above: Students enjoy a tree hike and planting at ReForest London.*

*Below: St. Francis Catholic School students have fun posing for a photo while planting trees in their schoolyard.*



# VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers made another successful year possible through the donation of over 13,000 hours of their time. In total, 6,463 volunteers completed 7,731 different actions - all to make London a healthier place. A significant portion of these hours were contributed by school groups, where the next generation of tree planters was cultivated.

Our volunteers directly plant and care for thousands of trees, but they also do so much more to make what ReForest London does possible. Some of the ways volunteers help include assisting residents to choose the right tree for their property, speaking with the public at outreach events, helping in the office, creating maps, giving tree presentations, helping with transportation, serving on the board and committees, and even wearing the tree mascot costume!

Volunteering to plant trees attracts many different people as it is such a fulfilling activity – it's easy, straight forward, good exercise, and makes a difference. Helping our earth, having a feeling of accomplishment and being community-minded are rewards volunteers share.



*Above: A happy crew of volunteers at the Celebration Forest event.  
Below: RFL Volunteers chat with people at the London Middlesex Master Gardener's annual Seedy Saturday event.*







***Above: RFL Volunteers honoured at the 2017 AGM are (left to right) Robyn Anderson, Jake Martell and Suze Belleville. Below: Volunteers enjoy greeting the public at the Celebration Forest planting.***



Tree planting is an in-demand activity for local businesses and organizations because of its excellent team-building properties. There is a special feeling of a job well done when one looks over a once bare field to a now vibrant baby woodland ready to grow and thrive.

Our efforts to reach new Londoners are paying off with eight different ethno-cultural groups taking part in the very Canadian activity of tree planting, an activity that is literally putting down roots.

Volunteers are at the heart of everything ReForest London does. We thank them for their continued time and passion.

***"Trees we plant today  
Are a legacy of leaves,  
Reaching for the sky."***

*-a haiku by Jake Martell , RFL volunteer since 2015*

***"Volunteering regularly for ReForest London has kept me connected with people, the community and has expanded my knowledge of trees. What a great way to enhance the environmental landscape of London currently and for the future, along with the collective efforts of people with the same goal. Glad to be a part of it."***

*-Suze Belleville , RFL volunteer since 2015*

# FINANCIAL REPORT

Some of the numbers in our financials for 2017 look quite different than past years and that's a direct result of our partnership with Thames Talbot Land Trust to establish an Environment and Sustainability Centre for London. The project is early days but we have secured some major funding to establish the project and this is reflected in our cash position as well as our deferred contributions. These funds are for capital projects next year.

Excluding the new project, ReForest London still had strong revenue growth in 2017. A portion of the increase is a one-time bump attributable to Canada and Ontario 150 celebration funding for planting trees and connecting Canadians to nature.

Our full financial statements provide clear year over year transparency for ReForest London operations versus our new Environmental Centre project. ReForest London has an active Finance and Audit Committee and our annual financial statements are audited by PricewaterhouseCoopers LLC.

Sandy Ferguson, CPA, CGA - Treasurer, Finance Committee Chair

## Financial Statement Excerpts

	2017	2016
Cash	\$343,104	\$ 140,046
Total Assets	\$584,803	\$218,633
Deferred Revenue	\$246,778	\$70,300
Deferred Capital Contributions	\$153,338	-----
Unrestricted Funds	\$88,130	\$56,256
Restricted Funds	\$67,900	\$59,450
Total Revenue	\$807,520	\$681,481
Total Expenses	\$767,196	\$653,977
Surplus	\$40,324	\$27,504

# FINANCIAL AND IN-KIND SUPPORT

We are grateful for the support of many donors, from individual supporters to major sponsors. Each donation helps us plant more trees, educate more Londoners about their importance, and engage our community in planting and caring for trees.

## LEAD SPONSOR - London Life

London Life has been the Lead Sponsor of ReForest London since 2009. In addition to their financial support, this corporate leader has also planted trees on their own land, and encourages their employees to volunteer to plant trees in the community.

### Forest (\$10,000 or more)

City of London

CN EcoConnexions

The Government of Canada  
(EcoAction)

London Life

Ontario Trillium Foundation

The Province of Ontario

The Richard & Beryl Ivey Fund  
a fund within the London Community  
Foundation

TD Friends of the Environment  
Foundation

Tree Canada

Western University

### Tall Oak (\$5,000 - \$9,999)

Cornerstone Architecture

Orgaworld

RBC Foundation

Walter J. Blackburn Foundation

### Sugar Maple (\$1,000 - \$4,999)

102.3 Jack FM

Bentley Hearing Services

Canada Bread

CLC Tree Services

Donald Craig

CityMatch

Ellipsis Digital

ESRI

Form & Build Supply

Friends of the Civic Garden Complex

Gosling Foundation

Harris Home Hardware

IKEA

KPMG

The Lawson Foundation

Linda Lustins

London Hydro

London Inc. Magazine

Dr. Carlo Pavan

Nancy Poole

SCENE Magazine

STIHL Limited Canada

St. Williams Nursery & Ecology Centre

TRY Recycling

Western Dental Sciences

Western Fair District

White Oaks Mall



# LOOKING AHEAD

ReForest London and Thames Talbot Land Trust are partnering to establish London's first and only environmental education centre where our offices are located on 5.6 hectares of land adjacent to the Westminster Ponds ESA. This is an opportunity to create a remarkable new amenity for London and area and more importantly, to create a profound impact on our community by modelling, teaching and leading urban sustainability.

The Centre will honour its natural, built and cultural heritage, including the story of veterans and the site's provenance of nature appreciation and health care. The entire project will take several years to accomplish with the first phase launching in 2018.

In 2017, ReForest London embarked on a one-year study to explore whether the Wellington County Green Legacy Program, a hugely successful tree growing program which involves school children and community volunteers, can be replicated in London to realize our goal of planting a million new trees in the Forest City.

There are lots of exciting things on the horizon for 2018 and beyond!



*Above: A 'before' view of the Wellington Building at Westminster Ponds.  
Below: Students planting acorns for a video about the 2018 Seeds to Forest schools program.*



# REFOREST LONDON BOARD & COMMITTEES

Thank you to our dedicated and hard-working Board of Directors, Committees and thousands of volunteers for making London greener and healthier and being committed to keeping the Forest in the Forest City.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Linda Lustins**, Chair  
Professional Group Facilitator

**Robert T. Anderson**, Director  
Financial Advisor, Freedom 55 Financial

**Mike Bloxam**, Trees Committee Chair  
Owner, SunTap Technologies

**John Cabral**, Director  
Chartered Professional Accountant

**Vanessa Dolishny**, Marketing  
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Manager, Communications, LCF

**Katie denBok**, CPA, CA, Director  
Senior Manager, Enterprise Audit, KPMG LLP

**Hosam Elshrek**, Director

**Sandy Ferguson**, CPA, CGA,  
Treasurer, Finance Committee Chair  
Chartered Professional Accountant

**Craig Flinn**, Marketing Committee Chair  
Marketing Director, Trestleworks

**Paul Hendrikx**, Corporate Secretary,  
Governance Committee Chair  
Associate Lawyer

**Marcel Humelnicu**, CPA, CA, Director  
Accounting Manager, Thalmic Labs Inc.

**Dale Jardine**, Director  
President, London and Area Association for  
Volunteer Administration (LAVA)

**Harry Joosten**, Director  
Independent Community Service Professional

**Doug McIntosh**, Vice Chair,  
Fundraising Committee Chair

**Frank Pyka**, Trees Committee Chair

**Dan Shekhar**, Director  
President and CEO of CanAsian  
International Business Inc.

**Wan-Peng Sun**, Director  
Software Development Supervisor,  
Libro Credit Union

## REFOREST LONDON GOALS

### EMPOWERMENT

Empower community groups, businesses, and individuals to plant and care for trees.

### ECOSYSTEM HEALTH

Improve London's environmental health through planting trees and shrubs in natural areas, parks, industrial land, commercial properties, yards and along streets.

### EDUCATION

Educate Londoners about the importance of trees and how to plant and care for them.



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Ontario  
Trillium Foundation



Fondation Trillium  
de l'Ontario

An agency of the Government of Ontario.  
Règlement du gouvernement de l'Ontario.



STRONGER COMMUNITIES TOGETHER™

This project was undertaken with the financial support of:  
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Environment and  
Climate Change Canada

Environnement et  
Changement climatique Canada



ONTARIO  
15010



London  
CANADA



LONDON  
COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION

The Richard & Beryl Ivey Fund  
a fund within the London Community Foundation



TD Friends of the  
Environment  
Foundation